

MUL 1140 World Music Survey
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-available for consultation after classes-

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1. Course Description

World music has so many aspects and distinct dialects that it is quite difficult to ask generally about what it is or *why* it is. Therefore, in this course, we will go one level deeper – with questions like these:

What did “greatest rap stars” do back in 16th century West Africa when there was not even a piece of paper around to write down their lyrics?

How can a desert drummer send an SMS without cellphones, at the speed of sound?

What is the similarity between St. Peter's Basilica in Rome and the Sultan's palace on Java?

What are mysterious monkeys on Bali actually doing while chanting in three different speeds?

How can one create a musical instrument with the help of a couple of Coke bottle caps?

We are going to seek the answer for these questions together. Also, several other questions may arise from you along the way – to which I will be looking very much forward.

We are going to

- listen to loads of different sounds and soundscapes that you might have never heard before. Some of them will be so odd that you would suppose they are broadcast from another planet.
- watch videos of musicians who have never seen even a page of written or printed sheet music yet they are considered to be the greatest of their tradition.
- experience the difference it makes to have a musician play his/her instrument, not on TV or Youtube, but in close physical proximity.
- take part in live music act (possibly outside the college facility) to form a closer relationship and experience a personal touch with unique musical instruments.

This course is not for learning to read sheet music or to gain skills in better understanding the system of harmonics or solfege. Instead, generally you will better understand why and how a musical piece that you are listening to is performed.

2. Required Texts and Materials

Titon, Jeff Todd (Ed.): *Worlds of music. An Introduction to the Music of the World's Peoples*, 5th Edition, 2009

-if further materials are needed, suggestions will be given in class-

3. Assignments and Grading

The final grade is an average of the grades given for: Mid-Term Test, Final Test, Presentation, Music Essay and Participation+Attendance.

Mid-Term and Final Test

Tests usually contain one essay question and a number of shorter questions (some of them definitions), and they are designed to be solved within 60-70 minutes, so 90 minutes will give you enough time to write a good test. Tests are usually taken on the first class of the week during both Mid-Term and Final Week. The second class is reserved for individual consultations when I meet with each of you for a 10-15 minutes personal conversation about your performance.

Presentation

The music you talk about will be chosen together with me so hopefully you can prepare yourself for a musical genre that best fits your interests. A 15-20 minutes live presentation is required for a detailed and valuable rendering of the topic.

Music Essay

You will be asked to summarise your impressions about a piece of music you listen to in a short written form (1-1,5 pages). You can listen to the recordings at home too with an internet link provided. We are going to do two essays during the semester: first is shortly after the beginning, second is before the Final Test. Comparing the two essays will give you an interesting perspective on what you will have learned throughout the semester.

If you foresee any problem with completing the paper, please let me know before the scheduled dead-line. Late excuses cannot be accepted. (Note that only the second essay will be graded with letter values.)

Short assignments / quizzes

You can expect shorter assignments during the semester including video-analysis and solving tasks in groups, just as quizzes covering topics of the previous classes.

4. Attendance and Participation

Please see referring sections in the Academic Guidance Bulletin of McDaniel College for the rules of attendance (p. 17, *Class Attendance and Absences*).

You are free to make notations on your laptops or tablet. Browsing the internet or chatting on your handheld device (mobile, tablet, laptop), ignoring questions addressed directly to you is showing behaviour of non-interest and will not be tolerated. Signing up to this class assumes a basic dedication to its topic and you are kindly asked to stay committed to the initial decision throughout the entire semester period. You might feel that the class is different from what you have expected – in this case do not hesitate to share your ideas of what you would like to learn more about – of course within the barriers of our main topic. In return I provide you with a handful of knowledge you need to achieve the best result on the tests, and fulfil the course with great success.

5. Semester Schedule / Topics Covered

Subjects to be discussed or chosen from will follow the content of the textbook. We are going to focus on some of the most exciting cultures from Africa and South East Asia. At the beginning of the semester we will set basic rules of music (melody, harmony, tempo, rhythm, instrument families etc.) in order to obtain an analytic approach later on.